

RECOGNIZING THE BUILDING RE-  
DEDICATION AND RIBBON CUT-  
TING OF VIENNA ELEMENTARY

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the rededication of Vienna Elementary School. Founded in 1872, Vienna Elementary is the oldest continually operational school in Fairfax County. Today, we are celebrating the completion of upgrades that will improve the classroom experience for educators and children in our community.

Vienna Elementary School is one of the finest public schools in the country. Its mission is to challenge and support individual excellence by setting high academic standards and empowering students to become successful citizens. As a sign of its success, Virginia Governor Tim Kaine and the State Board of Education awarded Vienna Elementary the Board of Education Excellence Award. The award recognizes a school's ability to successfully meet benchmark standards in academic performance, and it also recognizes progressive improvement over time.

Vienna Elementary School is strengthened by its superb staff and also by an engaged and active public. The strong support of parents and area organizations teamed with the dedication of the school educators and administration provides an atmosphere that enables children to have new opportunities and access to robust academic support.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the rededication of Vienna Elementary School. I extend my congratulations and appreciation to the teachers, administrators, staff, parents and community partners who understand that quality education is the key to a bright future for our children.

DR. MILDRED JEFFERSON IN-  
SPIRED AN ENTIRE GENERATION  
OF PRO-LIFE LEADERS

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, today, I want to recognize and honor the life of Dr. Mildred Jefferson, who passed away on October 15, 2010, at the age of 84.

Dr. Jefferson was a trailblazer of her time. She was the first African-American woman to graduate from Harvard Medical School, the first female surgical intern at Boston City Hospital and the first woman admitted to membership in the Boston Surgical Society.

Dr. Jefferson was born in Pittsburg, Texas, on April 6, 1926, to Gurthie Jefferson, a minister, and Millard Jefferson, a schoolteacher. She graduated from Texas College in Tyler and earned a master's degree from Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts before attending Harvard Medical School. In her lifetime she also was the recipient of 28 honorary degrees.

Her life was historic in many ways, yet she will be remembered not only for the lives she saved as a physician but also for the lives she saved as an advocate for the unborn.

From the earliest years of the right to life movement, she dedicated herself to the cause, always beautifully articulating the humanity of unborn children. Poised and passionate, always focused and extremely devoted, she made history and inspired an entire generation of pro-life leaders.

Dr. Jefferson was among the founders of the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) and from 1975–1978 she served three terms as President of NRLC. She also served as director of Massachusetts Citizens for Life and a board member of American Life League. She was also a founding member of the board and a past president of the Value of Life Committee of Massachusetts and was active in Black Americans for Life.

Among all of her accolades and accomplishments, she should be best known for her own eloquent description of why she stood in solidarity with the unborn fighting day in and day out for their first right, the right to life. In her own words,

"I became a physician in order to help save lives. I am at once a physician, a citizen, and a woman, and I am not willing to stand aside and allow the concept of expendable human lives to turn this great land of ours into just another exclusive reservation where only the perfect, the privileged, and the planned have the right to live."

Dr. Jefferson was always graceful. She embodied compassion. Her life is an example to us of the impact of faithful devotion to the sanctity of human life. Dr. Jefferson knew that you cannot speak of human and civil rights, while precluding virtually all protection to the most persecuted minority in the world today: unborn children.

She reminded us all, "The right-to-life cause is not the concern of only a special few but it should be the cause of all those who care about fairness and justice, love and compassion and liberty with law."

Dr. Jefferson is correct when she said,—the cause for the right to life concerns all of us. Someday, when our goal of ending abortion is finally realized, future generations of Americans will look back on us and wonder how and why such a rich and seemingly enlightened society, so blessed and endowed with the capacity to protect and enhance vulnerable human life, could have instead permitted, and even promoted, death to children and exploitation of women by abortion.

It was an honor to work alongside Dr. Jefferson to fight the injustice of abortion, and I know her legacy and memory will live on in the lives of those who knew her and in the lives of the unborn children she helped save.

HONORING REVEREND DEFOREST  
B. SOARIES

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, Reverend DeForest B. Soaries has dedicated his life to im-

proving the lives of others. Whether it was organizing a campaign in college to stop drug use on campus, starting non-profit groups to improve the lives of his church community or working for the Federal Government to improve the voting system, he has been and will continue to be a true asset to the state of New Jersey. And while we were once adversaries in a political campaign, I am honored now to call him a good friend.

Reverend Soaries' leadership positions within our community, State and Federal Governments show the commitment he has to helping people move forward. As the Secretary of State for New Jersey, he was the first African-American male to serve as a constitutional officer and worked across party lines to achieve progress in the government, including increased funding for the arts.

His time as a Secretary of State and his years of ministry prepared him to be the first chairman for the Federal Election Assistance Commission. The agency was created to help improve the election system in America and to stay ahead of the curve on technological advancements in voting. Reverend Soaries' character was tested as he helped get the agency off the ground without the resources originally promised. While not all of the plans were accomplished during his time as chairman, Reverend Soaries did lay the ground work for the operation of the EAC.

I have appreciated Reverend Soaries insight and collaboration with my efforts to enact election reform. His contributions have strengthened my election reform legislation, and I greatly value his efforts.

Reverend Soaries has also made significant contribution to his community and the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens over the last twenty years. He has and is continuing to help create better family units by encouraging people to become foster parents or adopt. He is also creating new homes for low and moderate income families, while providing numerous financial and employment support groups to meet the needs of the community. Recently, he hosted a program that allowed those who had run into trouble with the law to come to church and deal with their pending arrest warrants or other legal issues in a safe environment.

The First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens has grown from a parish of a few to over 6,000 people. However the goals of improving the community have not changed. Reverend Soaries has helped the church maintain their goals of "spiritual growth, educational excellence and economic empowerment" through his continuous dedication to creating a debt free parish. He has created a four part program called "dfree" that teaches people how to live a financially responsible life and get out of debt. Reverend Soaries facilitated the construction of the inspirational \$17 million church complex that makes possible a number of church programs and has greatly benefited the surrounding community and Central New Jersey.

Reverend Soaries is a valued pastor of his parish and I congratulate him on the celebration of his 20th anniversary with the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, and look forward to the accomplishments yet to come in the next 20 years.